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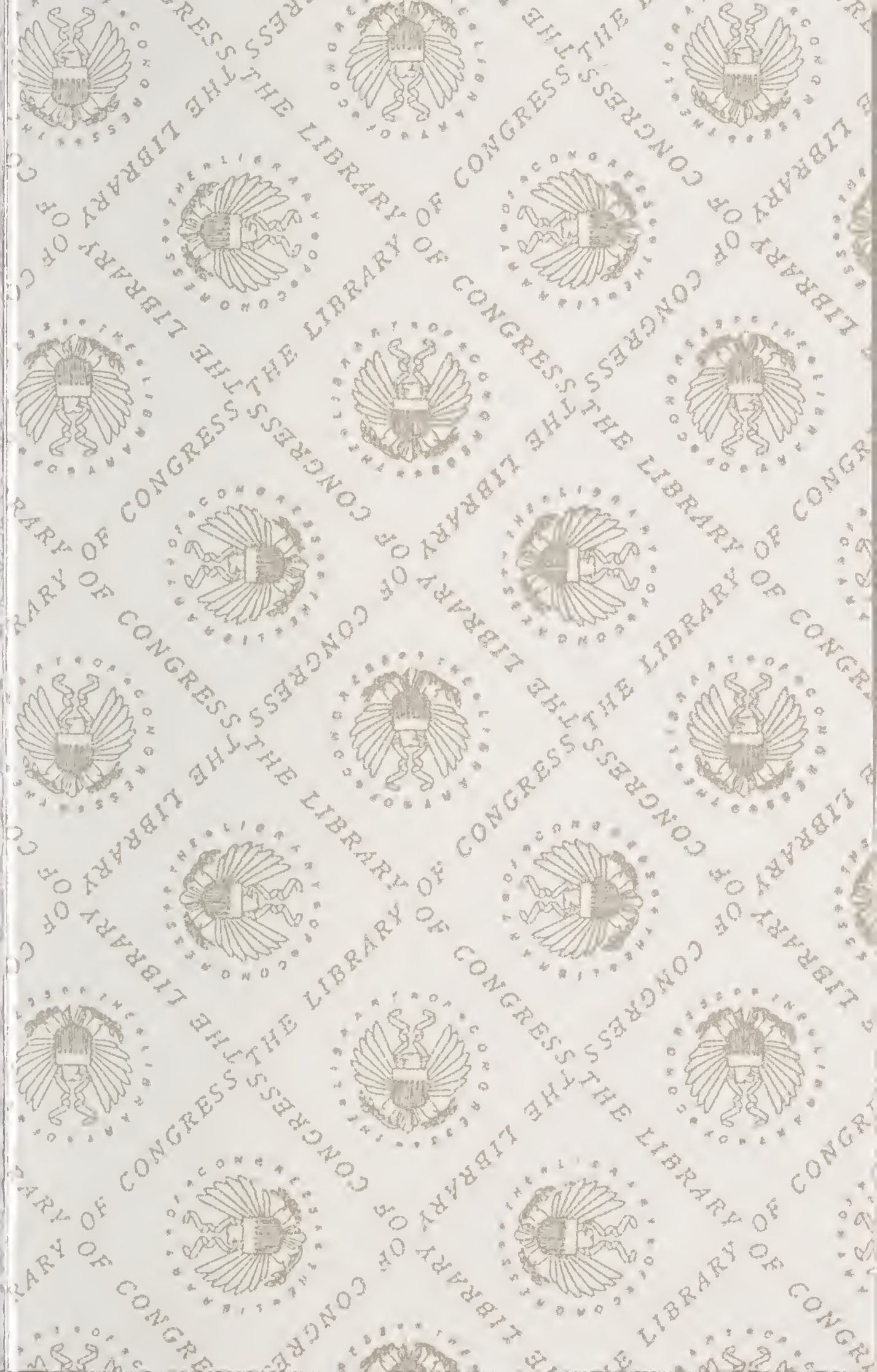
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THE GREAT  
ANTI-SLAVERY AGITATOR,  
HON. OWEN LOVEJOY  
— AS A —  
GOSPEL MINISTER,  
WITH A COLLECTION OF HIS  
SAYINGS IN CONGRESS.

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BY REV. D. HEAGLE.

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In Congress he was the recognized great champion of human rights, on the stump almost without a peer for his magnetic power, and in the pulpit a Boanerges. His sayings read like the crashing of round-shot in the ranks of an enemy, or like shell-explosions; sometimes like the falling of dew upon new-mown fields.

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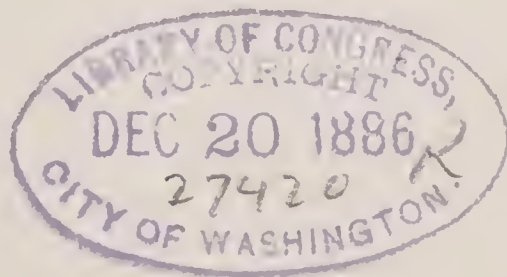


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## PREFATORY NOTE.

Very few characters have been produced by the nineteenth century that, in point of moral grandeur, excel Hon. Owen Lovejoy. Still no biography of this remarkable man has as yet appeared. Especially is his life as minister of the gospel largely unknown to the public in general. The object of this little publication is, therefore, to collect and state, with some fullness, these facts of so much importance to a correct understanding of what Mr. Lovejoy did and was. Not as a scheme to make money out of, but simply as a "labor of love," has this pamphlet been prepared; and it is believed, or rather known, to be the most exhaustive presentation of the items belonging to Mr. L.'s ministerial history that has ever been attempted. Only as a very imperfect and hasty sketch, however, is it offered to the public.

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1886.



## HON. OWEN LOVEJOY.

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Less than a quarter of a century ago Hon. Owen Lovejoy was one of the most conspicuous figures in the United States Congress. He was so not only by virtue of a commanding genius, rare oratorical powers, and advanced convictions regarding the anti-slavery cause,—a cause which then yet gave its representatives a kind of distinction, if not equally wide respect,—but also in consequence of actual and important services rendered by him to the government and the country in general. Abraham Lincoln, in a letter written shortly after Mr. Lovejoy's death, says of those services as related to himself: "Throughout my heavy and perplexing responsibilities here (in Washington, as President) to the day of his death, it would scarcely wrong any other to say *he was my most generous friend.*" Also in the same letter, "My acquaintance with him began about ten years ago, since which time it has been quite intimate, and every step in it has been one of increasing respect and

esteem, ending with his life, in no less than affection on my part." How much Mr. Lincoln was attached to Mr. Lovejoy, and also how greatly he had been assisted by him, both in becoming President, and in accomplishing many duties belonging to that office, especially such duties as related to a disposition of slavery in the various phases assumed by it all through much of the war, are matters best known by those who have a more intimate acquaintance with the workings of government and of politics during those exciting, trying times. The very last letter ever written by Mr. Lovejoy,—from Brooklyn, New York, where he was at the time, mortally ill,—was in reference to a Universal Emancipation bill which he had himself introduced in Congress, and which he hoped to be able by returning health to advocate, and to help press if possible into a law,—also as he says, his hope was—by this bill, or arguments in connection with it—"to exculpate the Fathers, and and clear up the Constitution from the charges of pro-slavery men."

But he did not live to be again in Congress. He died in Brooklyn, at the residence of a friend, March 25th, 1864. His



remains were buried in Oakland Cemetery, one-half mile west of the beautiful little city of Princeton, Illinois, and there they still lie. Princeton is the place where Mr. Lovejoy had made his home for twenty-six years, and where yet most members of his family reside. Visiting not long since the burial-place mentioned, and considering how unlike the grand living character filling so large a territory with his name and influence, the poor silent remains in the coffin now are, the writer had it impressed upon him, as seldom before, how incomparably superior the living man is not only to the dead, but to all clay subject to disorganization, death and decay. Surely, one says involuntarily to himself, when standing in the presence of this dust, that which made Owen Lovejoy what he was, is not anything here; the great intellect, the noble conscience, the strong, resolute, and widely sympathetic heart, are matters wholly different from mere physical being. In other words, the power of spirit and the power of mere matter, come out in striking contrast to him who meditates these things in the presence of Owen Lovejoy's grave.

But the object of this paper is not to

outline the greatness of Mr. Lovejoy in general, nor to write his biography, much less to insist upon his personal significance and doings in Congress; rather is it to describe, somewhat in full, quite a large chapter of his life which is not very well known to the general public. Nevertheless it is a chapter which the writer thinks is one of great importance in Mr. Lovejoy's biography, and one which must be understood in order to gain a correct apprehension of the history of this remarkable man. Besides being Congressman, an anti-slavery agitator, and widely known as a platform-speaker, *he was for seventeen years a regularly settled, duly installed, successful and greatly honored pastor of an orthodox Christian church*,—this is the fact to which we wish to call special attention in the following paragraphs.

The scene of Mr. Lovejoy's ministerial labors was, as said, Princeton, Illinois. At present it is a town of between four and five thousand inhabitants. It is the county-seat of Bureau county, one of the largest, richest, and in every way foremost agricultural counties in the State. What the residents of Princeton especially boast of, is its general beauty, its handsome residences and shaded



streets, its graveled thoroughfares leading out into the country, its excellent schools, and the generally high moral and Christian character of its people. When Mr. Lovejoy came to the place, in October, 1838, its population numbered only a few hundred, and its general aspects were those of any newly started, rapidly growing Western town. He came a licensed preacher, the license having been received, we believe, from a presbytery convened at Jacksonville, in the same State. Before that however, Mr. Lovejoy had studied theology for a time with his brother, Elijah P. Lovejoy, in Alton, and also with an Episcopal clergyman there; and still earlier he had come from Maine, where he was born, had studied letters and theology, and for a while was teacher in some kind of a school.

With this preparation, coming to Princeton, he was immediately engaged by the First Congregational church in the place, as supply of their pulpit, and was afterwards regularly ordained as their pastor. Some of the older members of the church, still living, tell with no little relish of the way Mr. L——— decided the matter of his coming to Princeton. He had come up

from Peoria on horseback until within a few miles of the town. There the road divided, one branch leading off to Geneseo, another new town about the size of P., and some forty miles west, and the other branch coming on to Princeton. At each of these towns, it had been learned by him, there was a church without a pastor, or that the services of a minister were desired. So being called to neither place, and having nevertheless to decide that difficult question of where duty would have him go, he was naturally in something of a quandary. Finally he determined to proceed, and did proceed in the direction that was taken by the horse left without guidance from the reins; and so it came to pass that by a kind of instinctive providence, or call it *horse wisdom*, Mr. L. decided to make his home in Princeton. The fact, however, that for seventeen years he found here a successful pastoral settlement,—the only pastorate he ever had,—besides the fact of this being the place where much of his other work was done, and where all his honorable career had its start, would seem to justify the belief that he did not, in coming to the place, make a mistake.

The church of which he assumed the



pastorate was one that had been organized away back at Northampton, in Massachusetts, by a colony just about starting for the West. They brought the organization with them, like the Israelites bearing the ark of the covenant through the wilderness; and like them, about the first thing they cared for, after arriving at the point of destination, was this institution of a religious nature. This church, moreover, proved to be the first of that faith and order in the whole State of Illinois. A comparatively small body when Mr. Lovejoy came to it, the church grew during his ministry, until at his resignation, in 1855, it was probably one of the largest and most influential in all this western region, outside of Chicago. The wonder is not that Mr. Lovejoy succeeded as he did in the ministry of the gospel, but rather that a man of such extraordinary talents could have been kept for so long a time in so small a place. To be sure, his services were sought after, somewhat, by churches in larger and more conspicuous fields, as for instance by a congregation in Milwaukee, Wisconsin; and had he occupied some such field, no doubt the lustre of his name, as a servant of the gospel, would have been much greater than it is; as he certainly

would have been equal to any place offered to and accepted by him. But yet for some reason or other (most probably his anti-slavery doctrines being at least the chief cause), his whole ministerial life was spent in a country town of but a few thousand inhabitants, and having, when he came to it, only a few hundred.

Mr. Lovejoy's career however was, as is well known, not wholly a ministerial one. Even while being a minister, and as such, he interested himself not a little in those more particularly humanitarian or ethical features of the work of the gospel which we may call its more earthward side. In other words, the view that he took of the gospel, while embracing the things which belong to salvation from sin, or to happiness and virtue in another world, was rather perhaps one which looked more generally to establishing as much as possible of the kingdom of God in this life. Not that Mr. L. did not value the eternal interests of the gospel, or that he did not by a use of the gospel seek to save the souls of men round about him. He did do that. He both preached and prayed, and himself entertained the belief of eternal salvation by



the death of Christ and the regenerating and sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit; and a number of times during his ministry his church experienced a more or less extensive revival of religion. But after all, as said, Mr. Lovejoy's work would, from an orthodox ministerial point of view, be pronounced one rather, or more largely, in the interest of humanitarian and ethical benefits in human experience, than of eternal salvation from sin. Accordingly it was natural that he should be found, as he was, often and enthusiastically engaged in temperance work. He both valued teetotalism as the only safe principle of action for the individual, and early learned to believe in prohibition as a State measure. Many were the instances in which his services were of especial importance in helping on the cause. For example, it is reported of him, that once when a saloon had commenced business in Princeton, with the suggestive words painted over its door, "Hole in the wall," the following Sunday he took for his text that passage in Ezekiel, chapter 8:7-10, where the prophet tells of his seeing in vision a hole in the wall of Jerusalem, and of his going through it, and then beholding all manner of strange and wicked abominations,—and preaching

upon these words a most powerful, scathing, excoriating sermon, the consequence was that a day or two afterwards the saloon disappeared. Whether owing to his influence or not, the saloons never during Mr. L.'s ministry obtained much of a foothold in Princeton, and even yet the town is, when compared with many others, noticably free from such iniquitous pests.

Another moral cause in which the man of whom we are writing took particular interest, was, as is well known, *abolitionism*, or the resistance and overthrow of slavery, especially as it existed in the United States. This was, indeed, Mr. Lovejoy's great hobby; if it is right to call that a hobby to which a person may give most intelligent and conscientious attention, and in which the weal or woe of millions of human beings is involved. But whatever the name of it, certain it is that Mr. Lovejoy took very great interest in the cause of anti-slavery, and gave to this cause a good deal of attention, time, effort and sacrifice, perhaps more than to any other one public object that engaged him in life. He made so much of this cause, not for the reason that he supposed there was no other end in life worthy of earnest and great devotion, much less be-

cause he supposed that religion should be displaced, or set below, the subject of anti-slavery, but rather because, as he conceived of the freeing of men from bondage, this matter is a part, and not an unimportant part of religion, especially of the religion of Christ. "God hath made of one blood all the nations of the earth," "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so unto them,"—these are Scriptures that Mr. Lovejoy delighted to quote, and often did quote; as also he made frequent use of the Christian doctrine that Jesus Christ died for all mankind. Accordingly, as he put any amount of religion, and especially of religious enthusiasm, into his anti-slavery efforts, so he also put the largest share possible, consistently with other ends, of anti-slavery doctrine and sentiment into his religious services. Perhaps no sermon of his, even though upon some abstract, highly theological theme, came to an end, or at all events very few of his discourses so did, without having in them somewhere or other a reference—a paragraph it might be, or a large digression right in the heart of the homily, relating to the iniquity of holding men in bondage, the wretched condition of the slave, or the duty of all men who prize their own personal

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liberty, and who love God and the Lord Jesus-Christ, to use what influence they have, in overcoming the barbarity, the wickedness, and the awful disgrace of having three or four million human beings in bondage here in our own country. What Mr. Beecher and Dr. Cheever were in Brooklyn and New York, and Theodore Parker in Boston, that, and perhaps more abundantly, was parson Lovejoy, during much of his ministry, in respect to teaching from the pulpit, or in connection with regular religious discourse, anti-slavery doctrine. Nor was such preaching without its effect. Whatever the results attendant upon the efforts made by the three other abolition preachers named, working in the East, Owen Lovejoy laboring in a little country town of the West, stirred up the whole region for many miles round him; and not only that, but gradually this part of the American populace became converted to his doctrines,—that is, on the anti-slavery question. Not that all this result came from his preaching, or from any work done by Mr. Lovejoy alone; there were other active anti-slavery men scattered through this territory. But in all the movement named Mr. Lovejoy was the one prominent, the central figure; and to his preaching must

be accredited at least the agency of starting the work, as well as perhaps of being one of its most continual and main inspirations.

In due time, moreover, this movement sent Mr. Lovejoy to Congress, particularly as its representative; and it re-elected him three times in succession to the same place. Once after he had been in Congress some seven years, being in Princeton, and conversing with an old acquaintance upon the desirability of public political life as compared with that of being an humble minister of the gospel, he remarked, "If I had my life to live over again, I do not believe I would forsake the pulpit. Politics is simply a dog's existence;" and the way in which he justified himself for doing as he did, was by believing that his position in Congress had enabled him to do more good than he could have achieved as the pastor of a church. Of course, the good he had in mind, was especially that connected with the overthrow of American slavery. This being achieved, there would result other moral, as well as vast and more distinctively religious benefits.

But it was not wholly by his preaching abolition that this agitator advanced his cause; it was also done, and perhaps quite as suc-

cessfully or importantly, by his practicing, at least to a certain extent, his own preaching. The Fugitive Slave Law was enacted in September, 1850, but long before that it had been the custom of Southern slaveholders to enter the free states of the North, and arrest, by law or otherwise, fugitive slaves found in such territory, and convey them back to their former condition of bondage. Moreover, some of the Northern states, and Illinois among the number, had laws of their own, providing for the occurrence of such acts, and for the protection and assistance of the men engaged in them. These procedures terribly offended Mr. Lovejoy. From his first appearance as a public man or speaker, he proclaimed himself, wherever he went, as conscientiously, in heart and soul, opposed to delivering up the fugitives; and his opposition was not simply one of words, powerful and important as these were, but also one of deeds. Among other services he rendered in that way, was his acting as a manager along the line of an Illinois "underground railway," leading from the land of slavery, toward Canada, the land of freedom; and not a few were the fleeing ones that he in one way and another joyfully helped on their journey. Once he was prosecuted be-



fore the Circuit Court, for "harboring and secreting," contrary to the laws and majesty of Illinois, a poor slave woman who had managed in some way to get as far as Princeton, along the line of the said underground railway. Undoubtedly, moreover, Mr. L. was abundantly guilty; as he came very near being convicted of the *misdemeanor*, as it was called; but by the influence of able counsel, and also his own eloquence assisting, he managed to escape, not however without a very earnest and long-urged suit. Once also when, in a neighboring town, where he had gone to attend an anti-slavery meeting, he had there assisted in holding down to the ground a man who was trying to arrest a negro,—probably a slave fleeing toward liberty,—he was for this act tried, with several other parties, on the charge of assault and battery, and was himself fined "fifty dollars and costs." But he succeeded, by appealing to a higher court, in getting the matter annulled.† Thus in many ways did

† Once also he was pursued by a mob from the Court House, in Princeton, to his own private residence, which mob angrily and vociferously demanded possession of a colored man, whom Mr. Lovejoy, with others, had succeeded in rescuing from the hands of certain slave-catchers who had arrested him. But Mr. L. notwithstanding the mob must have numbered near 200 men, turned them all back and thwarted their attempt, by simply standing at his gate, and putting on a bold determined front, giving his pursuers to understand that whosoever should attempt to enter upon his premises, would do so at his peril.

Mr. L. suffer and act for the cause of anti-slavery, as well as that he both preached and prayed, and lectured, and gave stump-speeches, frequently in its interest. Personal abuse and obloquy he soon became accustomed to, as well as to opposition from those who disagreed with him as to his principles. But none of these things deterred him in the least from doing what he thought to be duty. Indeed so great were both his moral and his physical courage, that no danger however large, and no opposition coming from society however formidable, could at all move him from his purpose; and this is one of the grandest features belonging to his grand character, his indomitable and irresistible devotion to duty, especially to duty as connected with the welfare of his fellow human beings in bondage and distress.

An excellent school both in such devotion to duty and in moral courage he had been in, for a year or more, while with his brother, Elijah P. Lovejoy, at Alton. He was with that brother during nearly all the opposition and outrageous treatment he received in Alton, because of his attempt to establish there, in a peaceable, perfectly lawful way, a newspaper claiming the right to speak out as it believed upon the slavery

question. For this undertaking Elijah P. Lovejoy was killed by a mob, on the 7th of November, 1837. Owen being in the city, and being, as was the whole country afterwards, greatly affected at this the first American martyrdom to the freedom both of the press and the slave, besides having his own private fraternal grief in the case, went,—as he has left on record an account of the matter,—shortly after the occurrence, into a room where the dead body was lying; and there, as he says, alone with the dead and with God, he vowed, on his knees, never to forsake the cause that had been sprinkled with his brother's blood; and from that day to the day of his own death he was true to the vow thus solemnly taken. This vow and the occasion for it, explain much in the after-career of Mr. Lovejoy, also excuse much of what in language or manner might otherwise seem to be violent, or bordering on to extravagance, especially as appearing in some of his Congressional and other political speeches. No man had a tenderer heart than he; but never was there a human heart that brewed within itself a more fearful thunderstorm of wrath and sharp denunciation against a wrong, particularly one so



monstrous and cruel as Mr. L. conceived American slavery to be.

Another incident occurred in his experience about this time, which may have had, nay, it did have some effect in determining Mr. L.'s future course. He had, as it appears, at first meditated entering the Episcopal ministry, and in order to do so, according to the usages of that church he had applied to a bishop for orders. But the bishop made it a condition of receiving him, that he pledge himself not to agitate the subject of slavery, the very thing that Mr. L. could not, would not consent to do. "Rather than degrade my manhood"—such was his reply—"by consenting to any such condition as that, I will suffer to have my right arm severed from my body." Consequently he was not ordained an Episcopal clergyman, but in the end turned out to be a Congregationalist—an ecclesiastical position more in accord, one would think, with his strong independency of nature.

As pastor of the First Congregational church in Princeton, no constraints were put upon either his utterances or his work in general. Neither did he experience from

any source any material opposition, at all events none that hindered him in his work. Still, when he first came to Princeton the community in general were far from being converted to any such anti-slavery notions as those which he advocated. So, one Sunday, coming out in his sermon pretty strongly, as he usually did when expressing himself upon the subject of slavery,—coming out upon that topic with a good degree of force, he stirred up no little commotion among his hearers; so much so that several of the good brethren got up from their seats, and were leaving the room. They could endure such preaching no longer. “Well, my friends,” said Mr. L., pausing a bit, and looking after the departing ones, “it seems that my preaching here has an apostolic effect. But,” said he, speaking calmly, “I am going to preach that kind of gospel until you like it, and then I shall preach it because you do like it,”—and, of course, he was as good as his word. After a while the people came to relish such doctrine, but at first it was, as said, pretty generally, or at least widely distasteful. One of the ways in which this disrelish was shown, was on the part of little boys, who would at times, we have been told, waylay the “abolition preacher,”—hid-

ing behind a fence or some other obstruction,—and then when he passed, fling clods at him; as once also, at Bloomington, he was “egged” by men, because they did not like the doctrine for which he stood before the public as a representative. Generally, however, only those who did not know Mr. Lovejoy, cherished bitterness of feeling towards him; and the more he came to be known personally, as also the more thoroughly and widely his doctrine came to be understood, the more were both himself and the doctrines looked upon by the people favorably. Both were victorious at the time of his death. Then in all the State of Illinois few names were more popular than that of the preacher-politician, Owen Lovejoy.

As a pulpit orator, certainly Mr. L. had extraordinary powers. Not the most thoroughly or theologically educated in the world, nor always as refined in expression as he might have been, he was yet a talker talking always to the point, and talking out of both a heart and a brain full of original, fresh, living and powerful thought. No ideas of other men merely hashed over and retailed. And as powerful and original as he was in his thinking, so original and powerful was he also in delivery, even in the



wording of his ideas. Surely, there was in his expression no lack of clearness. As he said himself, when he painted a picture he did not mean that people should be in doubt as to who or what it was intended to represent; and he did not have, in order to have that matter understood, to write a name under his work. And so also in his arguments and the general connection and flow of his thoughts, there was always a clearness, a peculiar lucidity given to these matters, so that they seemed to stand out apparent of themselves; and no man after having heard him, had ever to question as to what he said, or intended to say. With him it was in this respect as Mr. Sam Jones says it is regarding himself,—“People may not like him, but they can not possibly misunderstand him.” Moreover, there was connected with his discourse a certain remarkable moral energy, an elevation both of religious and moral sentiment, a pointedness, a grandeur and a boldness both of conception and expression, a tone often of great pathos and seriousness, this coupled with a mirthfulness of disposition, even with sparkling wit and humor at times manifested; then a logical connection, quotations from the poets, and from the ancient classics, and

from the Scriptures; anecdote and illustration,—all this run together in one grand irresistible tide of eloquence and power, such as it is seldom the lot of an audience anywhere to hear. Having listened to him once, a person was pretty sure to come and hear him a second time. For even though his opinions might not all be accepted, yet very few could deny the charm of his eloquence, and people generally said, “Well, there is always something in Lovejoy’s sermons.” So they went to hear him; if from no other motive, then simply out of curiosity, to know what he would say.

Generally, too, Mr. Lovejoy was as a preacher widely popular, with all classes of society. People would come in, of a Sunday, to hear him preach, from eight and ten miles around. Often the little or larger room in which his services were held, would be so crowded that chairs and benches had to be brought in, to accommodate the people. The long lines of teams, too, tied to fences outside, or the clusters of them in the horse yard and sheds belonging to the church,—these also told of the interest manifested, especially by country people, to hear the “*black abolitionist*,” or the *grand godly preacher*, as

the sentiment varied regarding what he should be called.

In doctrine L. was probably a Calvinist, or what in these times would be called a milder type of Calvinist. His ideas regarding the rights of freedom by every man, were too strong to admit of any very rigid doctrine of interference with the human will coming from any source; and so he believed and taught the tenet, that all men can be saved who will. His creed also embraced the customary doctrines of grace, that men are naturally disposed to evil, that in order to their redemption the atonement of Christ, and the regenerating and sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, are necessary; also that all men are alike accountable to God according to the light they have, and that at the last some will be saved, and some will be eternally lost. This much of Christian doctrine can be gathered easily from sermons and political speeches of Mr. Lovejoy's that are still preserved; and as to the general soundness of his orthodoxy, evidence is obtainable not only from the sources mentioned, but also from the memory of many of his old parishioners still living, as also from the fact that he never was accused of the contrary, still more or additionally, from the



circumstance that for nearly two decades of years his preaching satisfied, theologically, and in every other way, a highly spiritual, intelligent, and orthodox Christian congregation.

Unfortunately but two or three of Mr. Lovejoy's sermons have been preserved in printed form, though more of them still exist in writing. His method was commonly that of a partly written and a partly unwritten discourse, the latter element often, especially in later years, largely predominating, and sometimes he spoke wholly without a manuscript. Moreover, people could rarely tell whether he used or did not use "notes;" so ready was he, and facile, both in thought and expression. From sermons of his still extant, and possession of which might be gotten, there could be published, we opine, a very interesting and wholesome volume, and one particularly valuable as illustrative of the literature of pulpit anti-slavery teaching, as also because of sturdy convictions on theology and other topics of human interest, which it would surely contain. Here it might be remarked also, that as yet no biography of Mr. Lovejoy has appeared, as capable of being written, and as important, as such a production would be.

From one of the printed sermons mentioned we give a few extracts, merely as illustrations of Mr. L.'s style, and particularly of his style at the age of thirty-one,—the discourse having been written and delivered by him at that age, and the place of its delivery being the Congregational church, Princeton, Illinois. The title of the sermon is “The Supremacy of the Divine Law,”—text Acts 5:29. In this production the preacher argues the general proposition that it is a person's duty, despite all penalties and human enactments or doings, to obey God rather than man; and this proposition he establishes, first, from the fixity or immutability of God's law, whether revealed in the Bible or in nature; secondly, from the greatness of the Divine majesty and power; thirdly, from a large number of instances given where the most excellent of people have violated human law in the interest of the divine; and lastly, from the opinions of celebrated jurists. Thus coming to the end of the discourse, Mr. L. says:

“It is asserted, and sometimes by religious teachers, that a law contradicting a Divine percept, nullifies that percept and releases us from its claims. Now against such sentiments—and they are abroad—I

protest. In the name of those Egyptian mothers who braved the cruel edict of the hardened tyrant their king, in the name of the people of Israel who rescued Jonathan from the hands of his unnatural father, and in the name of the Levites who would not worship the idols of Jeroboam; in the name of the three heroes who defied the proud monarch of Babylon to his face—in the name of Daniel who prayed with open windows—in the name of Peter, John and all the apostles—in the name of the glorious company of martyrs who went to heaven from the dungeon and the cross, the stake and the gibbet—in the name of the Puritans and Huguenots—in the name of the older patriots of Britain and the heroes of the American revolution—and finally and most of all, in the name of the Lord God Almighty, the supreme Ruler and Legislator of the universe—in the name of each and all do I protest against the sentiment that I cannot, must not, obey the commands of God, because the Constitution of the United States, and the Laws of Illinois forbid;—with the voice of all these united, with the voice of ten thousand thunders, do I proclaim, **WE OUGHT TO OBEY GOD RATHER THAN MEN.**”



A similar thought is expressed near the beginning of the sermon, "And I am willing to stand, though alone, and lift up my voice, though solitary, and insist on it, that the Most High ruleth among the nations of the earth.—that He is supreme, and that universal obedience is due to Him, the laws of the earth to the contrary notwithstanding." "What, must I give heed to the buzzing of a company of grasshoppers, and disregard the thunderings of Sinai?"

Scattered through the production are several instances of the preacher's droll humor or sarcasm: "But there was one man who was willing to do the dirty work of the despot. Doeg, the Edomite, was ready to butcher the priests of the Lord. *Doeg* was his name. If you extract one of the letters, it will still describe a class of men not yet extinct"—"We can, without positive instruction on the point, easily imagine that the great Jehovah would not like to be set aside for the monarch of Egypt, or even for such an august body as the General Assembly of the State of Illinois"—"I suppose if the legislature should enact a law like that which issued from the throne of Egypt, there would not be wanting, among our modern idolaters of law, those who would take, per-

haps those who would seek, the office of baby-killer general; but none of my congregation need aspire after the office. If any such appointment should be required and made, no doubt a Virginian will receive it."

From the strong telling sentences at the close we select the following: "Well, let them bring forward their penalties; their fines and imprisonments. Let them heat their furnances seven times hotter than is their wont; let them starve their lions, open their amphitheatres of wild beasts, prepare their thumb-screws and other instruments of torture, to make us tell where the fugitives lie concealed; let them erect their crosses, and set up their gibbets, and prepare their gallows, and whet their guillotines! What then? Can they heat a furnace as hot as the lake which burns with fire and brimstone? Can they kindle any flames that never go out? Have they any undying worm to prey upon the soul forever? Whom then ought we to fear? Him that can kill the body, and after that hath no more that he can do; or Him who, after he hath killed, can destroy both soul and body in hell? Hath not Christ well forewarned us, 'Yea, I say unto yon, fear him?' "

At the delivery of this very remarkable and powerful discourse,—for such it was, especially for so young a man,—quite a scene occurred. Mr. L.'s mother was in the congregation; and the son, after mentioning the death of his brother in connection with many other noble lives laid down for the sake of liberty, and then declaring, “And so will also Owen Lovejoy, God’s grace helping him, die rather than yield obedience to human law which conflicts with the Divine,” he turned to his mother, and said, “Mother, can you spare another son?” The aged matron responded heroically, “Yes, my son, you cannot die in a better cause.” Thus the spirit of liberty seemed to have dwelt in the heart of Mr. L.’s parentage, as well as in himself.

But the eloquence of this preacher can hardly be understood, disconnected from his physique, and the strong personal magnetism that seems to have belonged to him. Of this magnetism everybody who heard him, speaks. These were something charming, very peculiar about it. By this power he held an audience as it were entranced; and even after the hearer had left the speaker’s presence, there was still in his mind a



spell, from which when he awoke, it was like coming out of a dream. So completely carried away and oblivious to things belonging to himself, did the auditor, for the time, become. This power therefore must have been real, something idiosyncratic with Mr. Lovejoy. In body he was only some five feet eight inches high, but stoutly built. He would weigh, perhaps 200 pounds. Ruddy of complexion, with light hair and blue eyes, a goodly-sized mouth, an expressive countenance, hands with arms and lower limbs all strong and under his control, when he spoke the whole body seemed to partake of the thought, and to help in the expression. Not simply the tongue or the brain speaking was it, but the mind, the heart, the conscience, all there was of the spiritual nature; and all this mental and moral force spoke out through the entire body, and by the use of every part of it,—through gesture, and word, and look, and tone, and everything else by which thought or sentiment could be expressed; and this is the reason why there was always so much of individuality in Mr. L.'s utterances. Moreover, in this connection it must not be forgotten, that our orator possessed a powerful, sonorous, variable, and supple voice, well at his command.

Before finishing our paper it might be fitting to notice the attitude of Mr. L. as a pastor moving among his people or in the community. But of this we will only observe what was told us by one of his parishioners,—“He was a downright good man, in whatever relation he was found.” No sin was left uncovered by him, whether in his church or in the community; and his constant aspiration and endeavor were—so we are told—to make people all round about him morally and spiritually better, believing that thus their happiness would be increased.

Such, in his ministerial calling, was the man whose body now lies, as said, mouldering in the cemetery just outside of Princeton. Family affection has erected to his memory a substantial marble monument, upon which is inscribed simply the words—“Owen Lovejoy, Born January 6, 1811, Died March 25, 1864.” He was, thus, a little over fifty-three years of age. Directly after his death a considerable extensive effort was made to put up by public subscription a much larger and more imposing monument, as an expression of the appreciation in which his services are held by friends everywhere and the country in general. But the times did not

seem to be propitious, owing especially perhaps to the fact that the war being still in progress, public attention and interest were engrossed with that; and so the enterprise failed. In the more favorable days that are sure to come, when Mr. L.'s character and services being better understood, there will be wider and stronger appreciation of them, then doubtless the project will be renewed, and will be made a success of. When that time arrives,—which we hope will be soon,—and the larger, the well-deserved public monument shall stand in its place, let it not be forgotten to be inscribed upon one of its sides, as a suitable description of the man and his work, that Owen Lovejoy was *a gospel preacher, a minister of the religion of Jesus Christ*. Upon some other one of its sides might be written—also descriptive of his work in Princeton—those grand words of his spoken in Congress, February 21, 1859, in reply to the taunts of pro-slavery members present, that he was a “nigger-stealer,” because he had assisted fugitive slaves in escaping: *“Is it desired to call attention to this fact—of my assisting fugitive slaves? Proclaim it, then, upon the housetops. Write it upon every leaf that trembles in the forest, make it blaze from the sun at high noon,*



*and shine forth in the milder radiance of every star that bedecks the firmament of God. Let it echo through all the arches of heaven, and reverberate and bellow along all the deep gorges of hell, where slave-catchers will be very likely to hear it. Owen Lovejoy lives at Princeton, Illinois, three-quarters of a mile east of the village, and he aids every fugitive that comes to his door and asks it. Thou invisible demon of slavery, dost thou think to cross my humble threshold, and forbid me to give bread to the hungry and shelter to the houseless! I BID YOU DEFIANCE IN THE NAME OF MY GOD!"*

SOME OF  
MR. LOVEJOY'S SAYINGS.

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SELECTED ESPECIALLY FROM HIS SPEECHES  
IN CONGRESS.

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If I could honorably earn it, I would ask no better or nobler epitaph, than to have it written: He was the defender of the defenceless, the helper of the helpless.

Under the leadership of no man or angels, by the entreaties of no friends, by the threats of no enemies, by no hope of reward or fear of proscriptions, will I ever yield the millionth part of a hair more guarantee to the slave power. The spider's most attenuated thread is cord, is cable, to that gossamer line that I will yield in the way of compromise or concession to the claims of slavery.—Congress, 1861.

No human being, white or black, bond or free, native or foreign, infidel or Christian, ever came to my door, and asked for food and shelter, in the name of a common humanity or of a pitying Christ, who did not receive it.—Congress, 1859.

President Buchanan, believest thou the gospel record? I know that thou believest. Tell me, then, sir, did Christ shed his blood for cattle? Did he lay down his life to replevin personal property, and to redeem real-estate?—Congress, 1858.

The principle of enslaving human beings because they are inferior, is this. If a man is a cripple, trip him up; if he is old and weak, and bowed with the weight of years, strike him, for he cannot strike back; if idiotic, take advantage of him; and if a child, deceive him. This doctrine would justify angels in enslaving men; and archangels, in turn, would be justified in subjugating those who are inferior in intellect and position; and ultimately it would transform Jehovah into an infinite Juggernaut, rolling the huge wheels of his omnipotence, axle-deep, amid the crushed, and mangled, and bleeding bodies of human beings, on the ground that he was infinitely superior, and that they were an inferior race.—Congress, 1860.

It is as preposterous to think of taking slavery down through the civilization of the ages, as to think of floating an iceberg through the tropics.—Congress, 1860.

Refuse or neglect this; refuse to proclaim liberty through all the land, to all the inhabitants thereof, and the exodus of the slave will be through the Red Sea.—Ibid.

I am willing to concede that you (political opponents, and especially Southern members of the House, who had with much excitement and uproar tried to intimidate him, but in vain) are as brave as



other men, although I do not think that you show it by this abusive language, because brave men are always calm and self-possessed. *God feels no anger, for he knows no fear.*—1860.

I am afraid that I am not much like Christ. He went, however, and preached to the spirits in prison; and I think I never approximated so near to him as in this regard, while making proclamation of the holy evangel of God to sinners in this house.—1860.

Slavery is a moral, social, and political evil; a blight on the soil, a detriment to all the best interests of communities or states where found, and in its reflex influences, a reproach and damage to the whole country.—1859.

I behold the genius of Liberty standing upon some lofty peak of the Rocky Mountains, or of the Andes, looking northward and southward, eastward and westward, from Arctic to Antarctic, from the Atlantic shore to the Pacific wave, gazing upon a vast ocean of free republics, "distinct like the billows, yet one like the sea;" and when I look over that broad magnificent field, covered with teeming life, with its cities, towns and farms, its workshops, school-houses and churches, with all the varied and wonderful development of science, art, education and religion, that follow in the path of a free Christian civilization, as it moves along majestic and queen-like, leading and guiding the generations onward and heavenward,—then I exclaim, "Long live the Republic! Let it be perpetual." But American slavery which would blot out that republic. Let it *perish*, PERISH, PERISH!!!—Cooper Institute, New York, 1862.

Thank God! common-sense in the long run is stronger than nonsense.—Cooper Institute, 1862.

We have a right to explode the infernal bastille of slavery, in order to preserve the glorious temple of constitutional freedom, and the great interests of the country,—Congress, 1863.

Would I arm negroes? Ay, sir, not only would I arm negroes, but I would arm mules, and make them shooting machines, if I could.—Ibid.

When I was a boy I used to strike back at every dog that barked at me as I rode along the highways; but I have ceased doing so long since, and let them bite the iron that encircles the wheel.—Congress, 1859.

There is in man's spiritual nature a miniature God—debased this likeness may be, disfigured and dim, still there is the divine tracery. The pearl may be in the oozy bed of ocean's slime; still it is capable of being burnished and made to glisten in the firmament of a future and immortal life.—Congress, 1859.

Since the Ages drew up the reins and started on their journey, I do not suppose they have witnessed such a stupendous lie, as the——party now is.—Congress, 1859.

As from the altitude of the stars, all inequalities of the earth's surface disappear, so from the standpoint of man's immortality all distinctions fade away, and every human being stands on the broad level of equality.—Congress, 1858.

The cardinal article of our faith is, prohibition of slavery in the territories, and the federal government released from its dictation and control.—1861.

A blushing bride—there she stands, the divinest thing that God has fashioned and placed upon earth; radiant in the beauty of youth, her cheek glowing with the color of the rose, which expands and fades away into that of the lily, her eyes sparkling like the stars from their depths of blue, and her tresses falling around her neck like the locks of the morning.

#### JOHN BROWN.

No one can deny that he stands head and shoulders above any other character on the stage in that tragedy, from beginning to end, and from the time when he entered the armory there to the time when he was strangled by Governor "Fussation" (Wise.)

When the curtain rose, and startled the nation with this tragedy, John Brown lay there like a wounded lion with his head upon his paws, a sabre cut on his brow, bayonet gashes in his side, the blood oozing out, and life itself apparently ebbing fast. Around were certain little specimens of the canine species, snuffing and smelling, and finally one of them yelped out: "Mr. Lion, was the old war horse that pastures on the Western Reserve (Joshua R. Giddings) with you on this expedition?" The lion slowly raised his head, cast a disdainful glance upon the enquirer, growled out a contemptuous negative, and reposed his head as before.—1860.

When the Jews could do nothing else, they



spit upon Christ, and said he was possessed of a devil.

I know that persons who pride themselves on having legal minds, who can dance a hornpipe on the sharpened point of an attenuated precedent, who have spent their lives in prosecuting thieves for petit larceny before a justice of the peace, who draw themselves up and talk learnedly about *Grotius de legibus*, and quote like the conjuror: "horum quorum, spiritorum," "quousque tandem abutere," and so on, have their scruples and legal objections, and are digging after precedents like a dog after a squirrel! But I have no patience with this. It is no time to follow, but to make precedents.—Cooper Institute, 1862.

I shall never become a slave-catcher. Any one who chooses may transform himself into a blood-hound, snuff, and scent, and howl along the track of the fugitive; loll out his tongue, and lap up the dirty water, that stands in muddy pools by the way-side; overtake the rifle-scarred and lash-excoriated slave (a mother, it may be, with her infant, the love of whom has nerved her for the flight); thrust his canine teeth into the quivering flesh, brace out his fore feet, and hold the captive till the kidnapper comes, with fetters and handcuffs, to load down ankles and wrists,—I would not have the guilt of causing that wail of man's despair, or that wild shriek of woman's agony, as the one or the other is captured, for all the diadems of all the stars in heaven.—Congress, 1859.

Bow before man? No; I will make my way through eternal ranks of shining angels, and bow only in the presence of my Creator. But before a slave-holding man, *never!* NEVER!!

I gave the gentleman permission to *pray*, but not to *preach* also. (Said to a member of Congress who after being permitted to interrupt Mr. Lovejoy in his speech, with the introduction of a bill, went on to make additional remarks. Of course, Mr. L. brought down the house; as he often did, with his quaint, and quasi-religious observations. General Farnsworth testifies that nobody was more popular with members of the House of Representatives in general, than was Lovejoy.)

One time a member attempted to quote Scripture upon him, referring to the parable of the tares, and making the application that the tares, (slavery), continued to grow with the wheat. "All right," said Lovejoy, "but it is harvest-time now, and and therefore this is the time for separation."

Well do I remember the tremor of agony that shook the frame of that mother, whose heart was a sea of emotion when she heard of the death of her first-born (Elijah P. Lovejoy). With clasped hands, and uplifted, tearful eyes, she exclaimed, "It is the blood of atonement for the wrongs of slavery—the innocent suffering for the guilty."—Cooper Institute, 1862.

This exalted personage (Christ) humbled himself, and came down till he nestled beside the lowest form, the most degraded type of humanity, and whispered in accents of divine love, "My brother." We might as well mock at the bloody agony of Christ, as to jeer at the miseries of the poor slave.—Congress, 1861.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

When Abraham Lincoln was meditating the

issuing of his Emancipation Proclamation, John J. Crittenden, of Kentucky, attempted in the House of Representatives, to dissuade him from the purpose, saying, among many other eloquent things, that if Lincoln could save the country without disturbing slavery, there was "a niche awaiting him near to that of Washington; so that the *founder* and the *preserver* of the Republic should stand side by side." To this Mr. Lovejoy replied: "'The gentleman from Kentucky says he has a niche for Abraham Lincoln, where is it?" Crittenden pointed toward heaven. Then said Lovejoy: "He points upward, but sir! if the President follows the counsel of that gentleman, and becomes the perpetuator of slavery, he should point *downward*, to some dungeon in the temple of Moloch, who feeds on human blood, and where are forged chains for human limbs; in the recesses of whose temple woman is scourged and man tortured, and outside the walls are lying dogs, gorged with human flesh, as Byron describes them lying around the walls of Stamboul. That is a suitable place for the statue of him who would perpetuate slavery. But I too," he continued, "have a temple for Abraham Lincoln. It is in Freedom's holy fane; not surrounded by slave fetters and chains, but with the symbols of freedom, not dark with bondage, but radiant with the light of liberty. In that niche he shall stand proudly, nobly, gloriously, with broken chains and slave's whips beneath his feet. Let Lincoln make himself the Liberator, and his name shall be enrolled, not only in this earthly temple, but it shall be traced on the living stones of that temple which is reared amid the thrones of Heaven."



EXTRACT FROM HIS LAST PUBLIC PRAYER  
IN PRINCETON, ILLINOIS; THE OCCA-  
SION BEING A NATIONAL THANKS-  
GIVING SERVICE, NOV. 26, 1863.

Our Father, we bless thee for thy wonderful and manifold kindnesses which have followed us as a nation to the present time. We have, our Father, to lament that we have not fully obeyed the great principles which we avowed to be self-evident. We feel that we are called upon in accordance with the sentiments of the chief magistrate, to acknowledge our sins and to humble ourselves before thee. We have been guilty in that we have oppressed our fellow-man, in that we have robbed the slave of his wages, and his most valuable and sacred rights. Our Father, thou hast had a controversy with us on this subject. Inasmuch as we have not proclaimed liberty throughout all the land, unto all the inhabitants thereof, when thou didst proclaim liberty to us, we feel that thy judgments are upon us, and justly we are suffering for disregarding thy commands. Our hearts are torn with anguish in view of the terrible calamities upon us, and we feel that thou art saying to the nation, let my people go, that they may serve me, that they may enjoy their rights, which thou hast claimed for every human being. We thank thee that thy chastening hand has been so far recognized by the people of the United States, and that we have made such rapid progress in the principles of righteousness towards the slave. We pray thee to guide us and give us the victory. We thank thee that thou hast shown thy kindness towards us in guiding the minds of the nation. We thank

thee, our God, that thou hast given us a President who will call us together for thanksgiving, one whose integrity and honesty are above the suspicion even of his enemies. We pray thee to guide him by thy infinite wisdom. May he see the truth in regard to the claims of all to liberty and their rights. We thank thee for the success which has attended his administration. We thank thee for all the wonderful success which has attended our arms during the last twelve months—since the proclamation of freedom. We thank thee that our armies are moving forward, and we thank thee for the imposing brilliancy of their repeated and important successes. Give other and new victories to our arms, we pray thee, and prosper the cause of freedom. Bless our brave soldiers who are fighting for their Government, and for the institutions of civil and religious freedom. Our God, thou who art the Lord of hosts, mighty and terrible, lead our armies to universal victory. Grant that this unholy and causeless rebellion may be speedily and effectually put down, and that our Government may be firmly established upon the basis of universal freedom, and may this freedom be recognized and read of all men in its constitution and its laws. Our Father, restore to us all that old prosperity which as a nation we have enjoyed. Our Father, we know that if we are just and true, our prosperity will come back redoubled, and that we shall not only be a great and prosperous and enlightened nation, but that we shall be a holy nation. Our Father, help us to be true to thy teachings. May freedom triumph over our land. Hasten the day when there shall not be a slave, a single human chattel in all our land. We bless thee, O God, for

thy mercies, so numerous that we have neither time nor strength to recount them.

Be with us as a people. Visit all our rulers, all our officers, all our brave soldiers in the field and hospital, or wherever they may be, fighting or suffering for their country. The Lord bless all those who have been afflicted in this war by the loss of friends. Pour into their hearts the oil of consolation. Be to them better than the friends which they have lost. Assist us in the remaining duties of this occasion; we ask it for the Redeemer's sake. AMEN.

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